

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. [A method for preserving meat by:] A method of inhibiting pathogen growth by:

exposing raw meat to an atmosphere consisting essentially of carbon monoxide and maintaining the meat in a vacuum free, sealed container to maintain color and freshness while retarding bacterial growth.

[ Please cancel claims 14-30 ]

2. ~~31~~ (New) An inhibitor of pathogen growth on meat comprising an atmosphere of carbon monoxide.


3. ~~32~~ (New) The inhibitor as set forth in claim 31, wherein said atmosphere is further defined as a volume of carbon monoxide of approximately 30% by weight or volume of the meat being treated.

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-13 and 31-32 remain in the application.

The application is now in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,  
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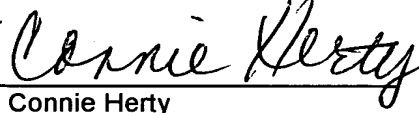
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